

Changing Uniforms: A Study of the Perspectives of Law Enforcement Officers With and Without Different Military Background on the Effects of Combat Deployment on Policing

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Abstract

Most academic attention regarding military influence on policing has focused on critiques of the military model of policing and police militarization and has neglected to examine the relationship between the two institutions and the transferability of attributes and skills from the military to police. Military service itself, when examined, has been treated as an undifferentiated concept that has not distinguished the effects of organizational structure, leadership, and myriad roles and experiences on policing. This study, using data from a survey of law enforcement officers throughout a New England state, compares and analyzes how law enforcement officers and supervisors with and without military background and with and without deployment experience differ in their perspectives regarding both the positive as well as negative aspects of combat deployment on policing. As such, it has significant implications for both the reintegration and recruitment of combat-deployed veterans into police organizations.

Keywords

combat deployment of police, military service and police, combat veterans and police

In 2000, Thomas Cowper, in a very provocative critique, directly challenged the so-called military model of policing as actually patterned after the real military and called

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for a rethinking of the military influences on policing. Although he believed that “conceptually military and police missions and objectives are strikingly similar” (Cowper, 2000, p. 243), he contended that the prevailing model “based on authoritarian, centralized control of mindless subordinates conditioned to shoot first and ask questions later” includes false assumptions about military leadership, structure, doctrine, and practice; and that a correct understanding and application of military concepts and methodologies could have potential benefits to policing (pp. 228-229). He argued that the military encourages “creative thinking, individual initiative, and audacious independent action on the part of subordinates in combat” (Cowper, 2000, pp. 232, 237) and “has developed operational doctrine based on decentralized and participative decision making and action” (p. 234). According to him, the military can bring to policing a critical understanding of leadership development and “unit and organizational missions” (Cowper, 2000, p. 235); “correct use of military operational principles such as combined arms, command and control, and commandship” (p. 240); and an active and integrated “Lessons Learned” program that incorporates existing doctrine with detailed and open after-action critique (p. 243). As an iconoclastic critique, Cowper’s essay was valuable as an initial impetus to reexamine empirically the conventional wisdom regarding military influences as they apply to policing today.

Significantly, the resonance of Thomas Cowper’s critique was not only attributable to his substantive argument and challenge to conventional wisdom but almost equally to the credibility of his experience as both a captain in the New York State Police and a former Marine officer (Cowper, 2000). Although much has been written about the purported effects of the military model and militarism on police organizations and training, there has been very little examination of the effects of actual military socialization and experience in the form of military service. Those with military background, and particularly combat deployment experience, certainly may very well embody a military ethos (unless they compartmentalized their military background) whether the police organization adopted an abstract military organizational structure or model (that may be more bureaucratic than military).

Effects of Military Service on Police

In fact, until some recent research on the effects of military deployment on policing, only two scholarly articles by Patterson (2002) and by Ivie and Garland (2011) have actually examined the effects of military service on policing. In one of those articles, Ivie and Garland (2011) state that “although the military model is rather pervasive in law enforcement and police agencies actively seek recruits with military backgrounds,¹ empirical evidence that military-experienced officers can outperform and better handle police work demands is seriously lacking” (p. 52). They first cite scholars who have argued that military experience does not translate well into policing as soldiers presumably follow strict orders, are constantly supervised, and function in large units, whereas police officers operate outside supervisory purview, by themselves or in pairs, and have wide discretion in how to deal with a variety of situations (Ivie & Garland, 2011). Nevertheless, they go on to suggest that

the more extensive assimilation to the military ideals of order, accountability, and attention to detail may be the foundation for an emotional strength that serves former or active military staff well when faced with challenging events in the police work environment. (p. 53)

Patterson (2002) had published the only scholarly article on the effects of prior military service experience on work events performed by police officers. Significantly, he distinguished between organizational work events and field-work events.² Relevant to the reintegration into police departments of deployed combat veterans, he predicted that officers with more military service experience should be familiar with the organizational characteristics of such paramilitary organizations and consequently perceive such events as being less stressful than officers without prior military experience; but because the field-work events and situations performed by police officers are different from *combat* service activities, police officers with more military service experience may report that these events are more stressful than police officers with no prior military experience. He went on to state that although both military and law enforcement agencies have a rigid chain of command structure and both are trained to use deadly force, police officers are not engaged in warfare activities but instead emphasize maintenance of social order. However, he found that more military experience did not significantly predict fewer organizational work events and lower perceptions of stress or more field-work events and greater perceptions of stress. Given his findings, he concluded that further research investigating the effects of functioning within a paramilitary law enforcement work environment is needed to support assertions that the military model is an inappropriate management model for law enforcement agencies. More specifically, he stated that based on his findings, he would question the assumption that it is difficult for military personnel trained in combat to abandon these skills and function as police officers.³ Ivie and Garland (2011) found that levels of stress and burnout were similar regardless of one's exposure to military life, but that military-experienced officers were able to handle the impact of negative events in policing more effectively than their counterparts.

Effects of Combat Deployment on Policing

When discussing the effects of military experience, and even when examining the differences in veterans' reactions to organizational and field-work events, military service has been treated as an undifferentiated concept, particularly regarding the effects of combat deployment versus organizational structure and other forms of military experience. Recent literature on the effects of combat deployment on police has been published mostly in trade journals⁴ rather than scholarly journals, and most of it has focused on the needs of the returning veteran. Most of the more scholarly literature has been by police psychologists on the psychological reintegration and successful transition from combat to police work, and even more specifically on post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD; e.g., Webster, 2008). Some of the literature does little more than alert police departments about PTSD and other psychological problems of

combat veterans (e.g., Curran, 2008). Although there has been considerable research on the stress and PTSD effects from combat on soldiers in general, little has been known about the effects of combat zone deployment on police officers or police organizations specifically (Webster, 2008). Webster (2008) predicts that “it is far more likely that police officers will be exposed to or involved in work-related trauma than will veterans who return to or enter many other occupations” (p. 25). But then she concludes that

we do not fully understand the ways in which police officers may be different from others who serve in combat zones—the extent to which their personal characteristics, training, experience, support systems, or age, for example, may serve as protective factors. (p. 25)

and that

a future research question is whether police officers and other emergency responders are at reduced risk compared to reservists in other occupations of having PTSD and other combat-related mental health problems. (p. 29)

To date, there have been no studies that distinguish PTSD from combat and from the police experience itself for veterans or how police work might heighten PTSD reactions from combat deployment.

Even less is known about how exposure to combat influences law enforcement officer performance (Klein Associates, 2009) and about role conflict between combat and policing models in regard to skill sets, interactions with the public, and command structure (Noble & O’Toole, 2009), although 23% of the approximately 18,000 law enforcement departments in the United States have Guard and Reserve citizen-service members in their ranks who were called to active duty under the provisions of U.S. Code (USC) Title 10 (International Association of Chiefs of Police [IACP], 2010). The question about what combat veterans bring to policing hardly has even been asked let alone adequately answered. A recent IACP (2010) report claims that “law enforcement leaders who recruit combat veterans are gaining experienced individuals whose skills are highly transferable to a career in law enforcement” (p. 18). Webster (2008) states that several of her interview participants emphasized the importance of recognizing the benefits military veterans can bring to policing, such as leadership skills, teamwork experience, and weapons training. Klein Associates (2009) mention leadership, physical fitness, greater discipline and maturity, higher ethical standards, experience working within culturally and ethnically diverse groups, greater experience with tactical operations, and critical incident response experience as benefits. Moreover, the Klein Associates’ (2009) study and the report of the IACP (2010) found that combat veterans felt that their combat experience supported a higher level of performance in tasks that include planning, coordination, and assessment enhanced their abilities to more quickly analyze situations, process information, and respond; made them more attuned to people and their behaviors; more confident in technical skills; and more willing to involve themselves in dangerous situations.

On the other side of the ledger were the negative consequences of combat experience, which fall into three categories: (a) readjusting to the rules of engagement in law enforcement environments as versus combat environments (Webster, 2008; Klein Associates, 2009), (b) readjusting to lower rank and authority in their law enforcement positions than in their military positions and thus receiving rather giving orders (Noble & O'Toole, 2009; Klein Associates, 2009), and (c) experiencing less empathy and lower tolerance for citizen complaints and increased suspicion of citizens based on nationality (IACP, 2010; Klein Associates, 2009). The first issue of readjusting to rules of engagement in law enforcement was identified most frequently and is most significant because the police need to control others' behavior in ways different from those used in a combat environment, and thus this issue has implications for the use of excessive or lethal force by returning reservists (Klein Associates, 2009; Webster, 2008). Also, according to Klein Associates (2009), "in military operating environments, troops can physically detain suspicious or non-compliant individuals even when little threat is present, while officers in law enforcement situation need a greater threat level to go 'hands on'" (p. 99). However, Cowper (2002) has claimed that

both [police and military] are constrained in their efforts by externally applied Rules of Engagement that limit the amount of force they can apply at a particular time and place based on the totality of existing operational and political circumstances as perceived and determined by civilian decision makers and the law. (p. 32)

Although some studies of the military influences on policing have focused on the effects of socialization during basic training, most studies of the military model of policing have examined military influence at the organizational level of analysis, focusing on how a quasi-military organizational structure in police departments shapes behavioral responses and attitudes to the task environment. Only Patterson (2002) and Ivie and Garland (2011) have seriously considered military influences on policing that are brought into the police organization through actual military service and whether police officers exposed to actual military service, having undergone socialization to military institutions and a military way of life, differ from police officers without military background. Moreover, there has not been any research on the difference in effects of non-combat versus combat military experience on police officers, which might distinguish between those merely exposed to military structure and those who also have actual combat deployment experience and might be more imbued with a different type of military ethos. This is particularly relevant to possible orientations in using force and in emphasizing crime fighting over order maintenance and service with less concern for community relations.

Purpose of the Study

In contrast to most scholarly work on the military model and militarism in policing that has assumed the superimposition of the model from one institution (the military) on another (the police), this study examines the compatibility and incompatibility of

the two institutions in regard to an evaluation of the effects of combat deployment on policing.⁵ In so doing, it suggests implications for reintegration of combat veterans based on what is unique to policing rather than other occupations and the recruitment of combat veterans based on the relevance of military deployment to policing rather than on recognition of service to country.

This study, using survey data of police officers from different agencies throughout a rural and small town New England state, differs from previous studies of the effects of combat deployment on policing by not merely surveying combat veterans but including and comparing evaluations of other police officers on these effects. More specifically, this study examines and compares how first-line supervisors and all other law enforcement officers⁶ from different-size jurisdictions, at different ranks, and performing different functions,⁷ with or without military background or combat deployment experience,⁸ evaluate both the stipulated positive and negative effects of combat deployment on policing. The study then focuses on whether and how those with combat deployment experience, those with military service background but no combat deployment experience, and those with no military service background differ in their evaluations, as well as how first-line supervisors differ in their evaluations from other police officers. In so doing, it provides a more accurate assessment of the effects of combat deployment and identifies where discrepancies in the evaluations of the effects of combat deployment may impede reintegration of combat veterans in policing.

Method

Sample

The original research plan for the study was to e-mail a Survey Monkey questionnaire to all full-time police officers in a New England state, of which there were 1,150 in 2011 (Vcic.vermont.gov, 2014). The president of the police association in the state provided a mass e-mail address that would presumably reach all police officers in the state that had a "state.vt.us" address, which included police from municipal departments, sheriffs' offices, state police, and special jurisdiction police, as well as a mass e-mailing addresses for all municipal chiefs in the state. The executive director of the state's sheriff's association also provided a mass e-mail address that would reach most paid sheriff's deputies.

Although the survey to the mass e-mail address for all sheriffs' deputies was successful in being transmitted, as well as to the mass e-mail address of all police chiefs, the mass e-mail address for all officers in the state that was provided by the president of the police association turned out to be authorized only for internal use. The owner of the LISTSERV for the unauthorized mass e-mail address suggested contacting different people, including the director of the police academy, three different officers from the state police, and a number of others, for an alternative set of e-mail addresses. The director of recruiting and training of the state police generously lent support to the project and sent the survey to all troopers in the state police, using the state police's

mass e-mail address, personally requesting each trooper to respond to the survey. Within about 10 days, an additional 150 completed surveys were received from state police troopers.

To increase the size of the sample, advice was solicited from the director of the police academy, who recommended e-mailing chiefs (using the mass e-mail address earlier given for them) requesting them to forward the survey to their officers and also provided individual e-mail addresses of all police chiefs and sheriffs. The survey was then sent to them using these individual addresses, as well as sending a follow-up survey to the sheriff's deputy mass e-mail address and requests to the heads of all the other state law enforcement agencies. The director of the police academy also suggested contacting the president of the state's association of chiefs of police and getting included on the program of annual meeting of the joint sheriffs and chiefs. This was done and a brief presentation was made at that meeting about the research, and the chiefs and sheriffs attending were asked to request that their officers respond to the survey. One more follow-up with the chiefs and sheriffs who attended that meeting, as well as those who had not, was done, while other high ranking officers and chiefs were personally contacted.

Consequently, 266 full-time sworn officers responded to the survey (23.13% of all the state's law enforcement officers). However, 186 of those respondents, or 16.17% of all full-time officers in the state, actually completed the entire survey. As it is unknown how many chiefs and sheriffs actually distributed the survey link to their officers, the response rate is also unknown except for the state police, among whom over 50% responded to the survey.⁹ Klein Associates (2009) had a return rate of 22% in their survey of law enforcement leaders, but the response rate among veterans in their study could not be determined because they had law enforcement leaders distribute surveys to veterans in their agencies.

It was important to include an adequate number of officers who had military service background, as well as those more specifically that had combat deployment experience, even if that required using a stratified sample. Of the 266 respondents initially answering the question about military service, 100 (37.87%) had military service background¹⁰ and 41 (15.53%) had combat deployment experience. Although no statistics on military service or combat deployment of police are available in the state, Ivie and Garland (2011) cite three studies in which 35% of respondents had military background. So, although it was difficult to determine the representativeness of those with combat deployment experience, it would appear that the number with military experience is congruent with the three aforementioned studies.

The sample itself consisted of 89.35% male officers, with a mean age of 39.33 years and an educational level of 50.57% with a bachelor's degree or higher. The officers had a mean law enforcement experience of 14.97 years, with 54.92% in patrol, 22.35% in investigation, and 18.18% in administration, and with 53.03% at the corporal level or below, 25.38% sergeants, and 16.67% at the lieutenant level or higher, and with 34% first-line supervisors.¹¹

Survey Instrument

When constructing the survey, practitioners, such as the director of the police academy and former president of the state's police association, were consulted for suggestions about items that might be included in the survey. Shortly thereafter, a rough draft of the survey was completed, which originally had included two sections in this study on background information and aspects of policing affected by deployment, besides two other sections not included in this study on military characteristics and influences on policing, and consequences of the military model on policing. This rough draft was then sent to a colleague who previously was a police and military officer and six other police officers, asking them to critique (a) specific items that need to be changed or deleted, (b) format, (c) language used, and (d) what might need to be added. After receiving the critiques, the survey was revamped and then converted into Survey Monkey format. It was subsequently reviewed and approved by the University's internal review board.

Dependent Variables

A listing of 18 stipulated effects on police officers who have been deployed to combat zones comprised the dependent variables. These included both positive and negative effects which were suggested in the previous literature review on the effects of combat deployment.¹² Among the effects listed in Table 1 were (a) enhanced leadership skills; (b) enhanced teamwork experience; (c) useful critical incident response experience; (d) greater awareness of behavioral subtleties; (e) enhanced abilities to quickly analyze situations, process information, and respond; (f) difficulty in readjusting to rules of engagement in law enforcement versus combat environments; (g) less empathy and tolerance for citizen complaints; and (h) increased suspicion of citizens in general. Survey respondents were asked to indicate the degree (using Likert-type scale response items measured at the interval level)¹³ to which they believed police officers who have been deployed in combat zones demonstrated certain positive and negative traits.

Independent Variables

The study examined how all law enforcement officers and how just first-line supervisors interpreted the effects of combat deployment on policing. It then examined whether there was a statistically significant difference between how first-line supervisors and non-supervisors evaluated the effects of combat deployment on policing. The study was also interested in whether there were significant differences between police officers with and without military service background and with and without combat deployment experience regarding the aforementioned items. Therefore, respondents were asked whether they served in the military and whether they had been deployed to a combat zone.¹⁴ Military service status was thus coded into trichotomized nominal categories: no military service, military service and combat deployment, and military service and no combat deployment.¹⁵

Table 1. Effects of Combat Deployment on Policing.^a

	Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Considerably	Very much	M	Response count
Enhanced leadership skills	2.7% (5)	14.0% (26)	28.5% (53)	34.9% (65)	19.9% (37)	3.5538	186
Enhanced teamwork experience	1.6% (3)	12.4% (23)	25.8% (48)	35.5% (66)	24.7% (46)	3.6935	186
Useful weapons training	2.2% (4)	5.9% (11)	15.1% (28)	44.1% (82)	32.8% (61)	3.9946	186
Greater discipline and maturity	4.8% (9)	11.8% (22)	26.9% (50)	33.9% (63)	22.6% (42)	3.3730	186
Greater awareness of behavioral subtleties	5.4% (10)	20.0% (37)	24.3% (45)	32.4% (60)	17.8% (33)	3.5430	185
Enhanced abilities to quickly analyze situations, process information, and respond	2.2% (4)	18.8% (35)	25.3% (47)	30.1% (56)	23.7% (44)	3.5914	186
Greater confidence in technical skills	3.2% (6)	13.4% (25)	25.3% (47)	37.1% (69)	21.0% (39)	3.7097	186
Greater willingness to be involved in dangerous situations	3.2% (6)	10.8% (20)	24.2% (45)	35.5% (66)	26.3% (49)	3.7097	186
Useful experience with tactical operations	0.5% (1)	5.9% (11)	15.6% (29)	43.5% (81)	34.4% (64)	4.0538	186
Useful critical incident response experience	2.2% (4)	11.3% (21)	19.4% (36)	37.6% (70)	29.6% (55)	3.8118	186
Useful experience working with culturally and ethnically diverse groups	7.0% (13)	22.2% (41)	36.2% (67)	15.7% (29)	18.9% (35)	3.1730	185
Difficulty readjusting to rules of engagement in law enforcement as vs. combat environments (e.g., when to use force)	28.6% (53)	30.8% (57)	23.8% (44)	9.7% (18)	7.0% (13)	2.3568	185

(continued)

Table 1. (continued)

	Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Considerably	Very much	M	Response count
Difficulty in readjusting to lower rank and authority than in military positions	27.0% (50)	24.3% (45)	28.6% (53)	13.5% (25)	6.5% (12)	2.4811	185
Difficulty in receiving rather than giving orders	33.7% (62)	27.7% (51)	22.3% (41)	11.4% (21)	4.9% (9)	2.2609	184
Less empathy and lower tolerance for citizen complaints	23.2% (43)	25.4% (47)	27.6% (51)	17.8% (33)	5.9% (11)	2.5784	185
Increased suspicion of citizens in general	27.4% (51)	30.1% (56)	23.7% (44)	14.5% (27)	4.3% (8)	2.3817	186
Increased suspicion of citizens based on nationality	40.0% (74)	27.0% (50)	15.7% (29)	13.0% (24)	4.3% (8)	2.1459	185
Greater work-related stress	25.4% (47)	28.6% (53)	24.3% (45)	16.2% (30)	5.4% (10)	2.4757	185

^aIf the items together were treated as a scale of consequences of combat deployment, then the Cronbach's alpha coefficient is .904 (and if the Cronbach's α is based on standardized items, it is a .907).

Control Variables

To test for spuriousness of relationships found between military and deployment status and the effects of combat deployment due to a possible lack of representativeness regarding the demographic characteristics and organizational status of officers in the sample, control variables were included in the analysis. These included (a) gender, (b) age, (c) educational level, (d) type of agency, (e) law enforcement experience, (f) rank in department, (g) main police function, and (h) first-line supervisor status.¹⁶ Gender was divided into two categories; age was measured in number of years; educational level into five ordinal categories (GED, high school diploma, associate degree, bachelor's degree, and graduate degree); type of agency into four categories (municipal, sheriff's office, state police, other law enforcement agency); law enforcement experience was measured as years of experience (as an integer that rounded 6 months or more to the next year); rank into six ordinal categories (patrol officer/deputy/trooper, corporal, sergeant, lieutenant, captain, chief, other); main police function into four categories (patrol, investigation, administration, other); and first-line supervisor status into two categories.

Results

Effects of Combat Deployment on Returning Police Officers

Table 1 indicates the degree to which combat deployment affects returning law enforcement officers on 18 dimensions related to policing, and includes both the breakdown by Likert-type category and mean score. As can be observed in Table 1, officers rated items with positive effects above 3 on the 5-point Likert-type scale and items with negative effects below 3. Only one item, "useful experience with tactical operations," received a score of 4 or higher. There were eight items that received a score of 3.50 to 3.99: (a) "enhanced leadership skills," (b) "enhanced teamwork experience," (c) "useful weapons training," (d) "greater discipline and maturity," (e) "enhanced abilities to quickly analyze situations, process information, and respond," (f) "greater confidence in technical skills," (g) "greater willingness to be involved in dangerous situations," and (h) "useful critical incident response experience."

As can be seen from Table 2, the 54 first-line supervisors rated the positive consequences of combat deployment a little lower and the negative consequences a little higher than the rest of the sample, but, as can be seen from Table 3, there were no significant statistical differences between the two groups on any of the survey items on the consequences of combat deployment.

As can be seen in Table 4, when examining the relationship between the stipulated effects of combat deployment on police officers and a trichotomously categorized military service variable (i.e., whether one had no military service experience, military service without combat deployment, and military service experience with combat deployment), there were statistically significant differences on all items with positive effects (except "useful weapons training") and none with items with negative effects. Besides the eight items mentioned above, there were statistically significant differences between the three categories of military service experience and the items "greater awareness of behavioral subtleties" and "useful experience working with culturally and ethnically diverse groups." A more careful examination of means for each of the three categories (included in Table 5) indicates that there was a progressive increase in the mean for almost all positively stated items as categories changed from "no military service" to "military service but no combat deployment" to "military service with combat deployment." There also tends to be a greater difference in the means between "military service with combat deployment" and "military service without combat deployment" than between "military service without combat deployment" and "no military service."¹⁷

As can be seen in Table 6, when controlling for the aforementioned eight variables using an ANCOVA analysis, all the relationships continue to be found statistically significant. The strength of the relationships found vary from moderate to fairly high as measured by R^2 (partial η^2 test) in the analysis of covariance. Eight variables had above a .15 R^2 in their relationship to the aforementioned trichotomously categorized military service variable: (a) "enhanced leadership skills" (partial $\eta^2 = .205$), (b) "enhanced teamwork experience" (partial $\eta^2 = .191$), (c) "greater discipline and

Table 2. Differences in Means Between Supervisors and Other Officers on Effects of Combat Deployment.

	First-line supervisor									
	Yes				No				Total	
	M	N	SD		M	N	SD		M	N
Enhanced leadership skills	3.3333	54	1.02791		3.6385	130	1.04179		3.5489	184
Enhanced teamwork experience	3.5370	54	1.07656		3.7538	130	1.00434		3.6902	184
Useful weapons training	3.9630	54	0.75143		4.0000	130	1.03430		3.9891	184
Greater discipline and maturity	3.4815	54	1.07705		3.6000	130	1.12477		3.5652	184
Greater awareness of behavioral subtleties	3.2830	53	1.16648		3.4077	130	1.15266		3.3716	183
Enhanced abilities to quickly analyze situations, process information, and respond	3.4815	54	1.11153		3.5692	130	1.12021		3.5435	184
Greater confidence in technical skills	3.5000	54	1.02331		3.6231	130	1.08023		3.5870	184
Greater willingness to be involved in dangerous situations	3.7778	54	1.04008		3.6846	130	1.07858		3.7120	184
Useful experience with tactical operations	4.0556	54	0.89899		4.0538	130	0.88319		4.0543	184
Useful critical incident response experience	3.8519	54	1.05343		3.7923	130	1.05431		3.8098	184
Useful experience working with culturally and ethnically diverse groups	2.9630	54	1.11530		3.2636	129	1.20234		3.1749	183
Difficulty readjusting to rules of engagement in law enforcement as vs. combat environments (e.g., when to use force)	2.5472	53	1.36672		2.2923	130	1.11679		2.3661	183
Difficulty in readjusting to lower rank and authority than in military positions	2.5094	53	1.28036		2.4846	130	1.18279		2.4918	183
Difficulty in receiving rather than giving orders	2.1923	52	1.10327		2.3077	130	1.21263		2.2747	182
Less empathy and lower tolerance for citizen complaints	2.6111	54	1.29464		2.5814	129	1.15716		2.5902	183
Increased suspicion of citizens in general	2.5185	54	1.29936		2.3462	130	1.09056		2.3967	184
Increased suspicion of citizens based on nationality	2.2453	53	1.29949		2.1231	130	1.16815		2.1585	183
Greater work-related stress	2.6296	54	1.29289		2.4341	129	1.13774		2.4918	183

Table 3. Comparison of Supervisor and Other Officers on Effects of Combat Deployment.

	Sum of squares	df	M ²	F	Significance
Enhanced leadership skills					
Between groups	3.552	1	3.552	3.298	.071
Within groups	196.008	182	1.077		
Total	199.560	183			
Enhanced teamwork experience					
Between groups	1.793	1	1.793	1.704	.193
Within groups	191.549	182	1.052		
Total	193.342	183			
Useful weapons training					
Between groups	0.052	1	0.052	0.057	.812
Within groups	167.926	182	0.923		
Total	167.978	183			
Greater discipline and maturity					
Between groups	0.536	1	0.536	0.434	.511
Within groups	224.681	182	1.235		
Total	225.217	183			
Greater awareness of behavioral subtleties					
Between groups	0.585	1	0.585	0.437	.509
Within groups	242.147	181	1.338		
Total	242.732	182			
Enhanced abilities to quickly analyze situations, process information, and respond					
Between groups	0.294	1	0.294	0.235	.628
Within groups	227.358	182	1.249		
Total	227.652	183			

(continued)

Table 3. (continued)

	Sum of squares	df	M ²	F	Significance
Greater confidence in technical skills					
Between groups	0.578	1	0.578	0.511	.476
Within groups	206.031	182	1.132		
Total	206.609	183			
Greater willingness to be involved in dangerous situations					
Between groups	0.331	1	0.331	0.291	.591
Within groups	207.403	182	1.140		
Total	207.734	183			
Useful experience with tactical operations					
Between groups	0.000	1	0.000	0.000	.991
Within groups	143.456	182	0.788		
Total	143.457	183			
Useful critical incident response experience					
Between groups	0.135	1	0.135	.122	.728
Within groups	202.207	182	1.111		
Total	202.342	183			
Useful experience working with culturally and ethnically diverse groups					
Between groups	3.440	1	3.440	2.481	.117
Within groups	250.965	181	1.387		
Total	254.404	182			
Difficulty readjusting to rules of engagement in law enforcement as vs. combat environments (e.g., when to use force)					
Between groups	2.446	1	2.446	1.716	.192
Within groups	258.024	181	1.426		
Total	260.470	182			

(continued)

Table 3. (continued)

	Sum of squares	df	M ²	F	Significance
Difficulty in readjusting to lower rank and authority than in military positions					
Between groups	0.023	1	0.023	0.016	.900
Within groups	265.715	181	1.468		
Total	265.738	182			
Difficulty in receiving rather than giving orders					
Between groups	0.495	1	0.495	0.354	.553
Within groups	251.769	180	1.399		
Total	252.264	181			
Less empathy and lower tolerance for citizen complaints					
Between groups	0.034	1	0.034	0.023	.879
Within groups	260.229	181	1.438		
Total	260.262	182			
Increased suspicion of citizens in general					
Between groups	1.133	1	1.133	0.849	.358
Within groups	242.905	182	1.335		
Total	244.038	183			
Increased suspicion of citizens based on nationality					
Between groups	0.562	1	0.562	0.386	.535
Within groups	263.842	181	1.458		
Total	264.404	182			
Greater work-related stress					
Between groups	1.455	1	1.455	1.036	.310
Within groups	254.283	181	1.405		
Total	255.738	182			

Table 4. Military Status of Officers and Evaluations of Effects of Combat Deployment.

	Sum of squares	df	M ²	F	Significance
Enhanced leadership skills					
Between groups	17.641	2	8.820	8.757	.000
Within groups	184.322	183	1.007		
Total	201.962	185			
Enhanced teamwork experience					
Between groups	18.759	2	9.379	9.710	.000
Within groups	176.774	183	0.966		
Total	195.532	185			
Useful weapons training					
Between groups	4.780	2	2.390	2.663	.072
Within groups	164.215	183	0.897		
Total	168.995	185			
Greater discipline and maturity					
Between groups	34.518	2	17.259	16.371	.000
Within groups	192.928	183	1.054		
Total	227.446	185			
Greater awareness of behavioral subtleties					
Between groups	28.397	2	14.199	12.027	.000
Within groups	214.868	182	1.181		
Total	243.265	184			
Enhanced abilities to quickly analyze situations, process information, and respond					
Between groups	30.446	2	15.223	14.090	.000
Within groups	197.710	183	1.080		
Total	228.156	185			

(continued)

Table 4. (continued)

	Sum of squares	df	M ²	F	Significance
Greater confidence in technical skills					
Between groups	18.955	2	9.478	9.129	.000
Within groups	189.991	183	1.038		
Total	208.946	185			
Greater willingness to be involved in dangerous situations					
Between groups	12.262	2	6.131	5.608	.004
Within groups	200.061	183	1.093		
Total	212.323	185			
Useful experience with tactical operations					
Between groups	10.667	2	5.334	7.241	.001
Within groups	134.795	183	0.737		
Total	145.462	185			
Useful critical incident response experience					
Between groups	16.326	2	8.163	7.942	.000
Within groups	188.088	183	1.028		
Total	204.414	185			
Useful experience working with culturally and ethnically diverse groups					
Between groups	16.319	2	8.159	6.184	.003
Within groups	240.146	182	1.319		
Total	256.465	184			
Difficulty readjusting to rules of engagement in law enforcement as vs. combat environments (e.g., when to use force)					
Between groups	1.172	2	0.586	.408	.665
Within groups	261.282	182	1.436		
Total	262.454	184			

(continued)

Table 4. (continued)

	Sum of squares	df	M ²	F	Significance
Difficulty in readjusting to lower rank and authority than in military positions					
Between groups	.656	2	0.328	.223	.800
Within groups	267.528	182	1.470		
Total	268.184	184			
Difficulty in receiving rather than giving orders					
Between groups	1.011	2	0.506	.360	.698
Within groups	254.467	181	1.406		
Total	255.478	183			
Less empathy and lower tolerance for citizen complaints					
Between groups	2.533	2	1.266	.885	.415
Within groups	260.581	182	1.432		
Total	263.114	184			
Increased suspicion of citizens in general					
Between groups	1.120	2	0.560	.415	.661
Within groups	246.778	183	1.349		
Total	247.898	185			
Increased suspicion of citizens based on nationality					
Between groups	2.332	2	1.166	.802	.450
Within groups	264.727	182	1.455		
Total	267.059	184			
Greater work-related stress					
Between groups	4.792	2	2.396	1.708	.184
Within groups	255.348	182	1.403		
Total	260.141	184			
Within groups	10.872	261	0.042		
Total	234.966	263			

Table 5. Mean Ratings of Effects of Combat Deployment by Type of Military Experience.

	Military experience											
	Combat deployment			Military service but no combat deployment			No military service			Total		
	M	N	SD	M	N	SD	M	N	SD	M	N	SD
Enhanced leadership skills	4.1935	31	0.83344	3.6410	39	0.95936	3.3534	116	1.05710	3.5538	186	1.04484
Enhanced teamwork experience	4.3226	31	0.70176	3.8462	39	0.90433	3.4741	116	1.06698	3.6935	186	1.02807
Useful weapons training	4.3226	31	0.70176	4.0513	39	0.97194	3.8879	116	0.99365	3.9946	186	.95576
Greater discipline and maturity	4.3548	31	0.75491	3.8974	39	0.94018	3.2586	116	1.11215	3.5753	186	1.0880
Greater awareness of behavioral subtleties	4.1290	31	1.02443	3.5897	39	0.96567	3.0957	115	1.13920	3.3730	185	1.14982
Enhanced abilities to quickly analyze situations, process information, and respond	4.3548	31	0.87744	3.7179	39	1.05003	3.2672	116	1.07427	3.5430	186	1.11053
Greater confidence in technical skills	4.1935	31	0.90992	3.7949	39	0.97817	3.3621	116	1.05827	3.5914	186	1.06275
Greater willingness to be involved in dangerous situations	4.2581	31	0.92979	3.7436	39	1.11728	3.5517	116	1.04959	3.7097	186	1.07130
Useful experience with tactical operations	4.5484	31	0.56796	4.1282	39	0.86388	3.8966	116	0.91727	4.0538	186	.88673
Useful critical incident response experience	4.3871	31	0.80322	3.9744	39	0.90284	3.6034	116	1.09449	3.8118	186	1.05116
Useful experience working with culturally and ethnically diverse groups	3.8065	31	1.19497	3.2105	38	1.33878	2.9914	116	1.06727	3.1730	185	1.18061
Difficulty readjusting to rules of engagement in law enforcement as vs. combat environments (e.g., when to use force)	2.2258	31	1.30919	2.2821	39	1.12270	2.4174	115	1.19195	2.3568	185	1.19431
Difficulty in readjusting to lower rank and authority than in military positions	2.5484	31	1.20661	2.5641	39	1.14236	2.4348	115	1.23637	2.4811	185	1.20728
Difficulty in receiving rather than giving orders	2.0968	31	1.16490	2.2821	39	1.09901	2.2982	114	1.21880	2.2609	184	1.18155
Less empathy and lower tolerance for citizen complaints	2.8387	31	1.26746	2.5128	39	1.16691	2.5304	115	1.18708	2.5784	185	1.19581
Increased suspicion of citizens in general	2.5484	31	1.36232	2.3077	39	1.07981	2.3621	116	1.12981	2.3817	186	1.15758
Increased suspicion of citizens based on nationality	2.3871	31	1.35837	2.1538	39	1.22557	2.0783	115	1.15582	2.1459	185	1.20474
Greater work-related stress	2.1935	31	1.07763	2.3421	38	1.30024	2.5948	116	1.17198	2.4757	185	1.18904

Table 6. Covariance Analysis of Rating of Effects of Combat Deployment on Policing by Different Military Experience.

Dependent variable	Type III sum of squares	df	M ²	F	Significance	Partial η^2
Enhanced leadership skills	39.344	10	3.934	4.272	.000	.205 (.157)
Enhanced teamwork experience	35.794	10	3.579	3.930	.000	.191 (.143)
Useful weapons training	18.270	10	1.827	2.069	.003	.111 (.057)
Greater discipline and maturity	43.962	10	4.396	4.193	.000	.202 (.154)
Greater awareness of behavioral subtleties	42.372	10	4.237	3.677	.000	.181 (.122)
Enhanced abilities to quickly analyze situations, process information, and respond	45.680	10	4.568	4.435	.000	.207 (.160)
Greater confidence in technical skills	41.137	10	4.114	4.320	.000	.206 (.159)
Greater willingness to be involved in dangerous situations	40.668	10	4.067	4.271	.000	.205 (.157)
Useful experience with tactical operations	21.271	10	2.127	2.956	.002	.151 (.100)
Useful critical incident response experience	26.497	10	2.650	2.567	.007	.134 (.082)
Useful experience working with culturally and ethnically diverse groups	34.371	10	3.437	2.771	.003	.143 (.091)

Note. Number in parentheses is adjusted R^2 .

maturity" (partial $\eta^2 = .202$), (d) "greater awareness of behavioral subtleties" (partial $\eta^2 = .181$), (e) "enhanced abilities to quickly analyze situations, process information, and respond" (partial $\eta^2 = .207$), (e) "greater confidence in technical skills" (partial $\eta^2 = .206$), and (f) "greater willingness to be involved in dangerous situations" (partial $\eta^2 = .205$). Items with more moderate relationships included (a) "useful experience with tactical operations" (partial $\eta^2 = .151$), (b) "useful critical incident response experience" (partial $\eta^2 = .134$), and (c) "useful experience working with culturally and ethnically diverse groups" (partial $\eta^2 = .143$).¹⁸

Discussion

All the positively stated items pertaining to consequences of combat deployment had moderately high means of well above 3.0 on a 5-point scale (and slightly higher than the means for consequences of military organization and style found in an earlier analysis), and the negatively stated items had means of around 2.5 or lower. Not only did the officers rate the negatively stated items low, there were also absolutely no significant differences in the relationship between these items and the three categories of the military service/deployment variable, indicating relative unanimity of opinion among officers regarding these negative consequences. Combat deployment was not seen by different categories of law enforcement officers, including first-line supervisors, as having a negative effect on community relations and the service function, readjustment to the rules of engagement, authority arrangements, or greater work-related stress levels. Not only did the respondents rate the effects of combat deployment on "increased suspicion of citizens based on nationality" low, they also (especially combat veterans themselves) rated "useful experience working with culturally and ethnically diverse groups" moderately high. The finding of a lack of significant differences regarding work-related stress was particularly significant given that this has been the major research focus and concern about the effects of combat deployment.¹⁹

The situation was radically different regarding the positively stated items than the negatively stated items. The officers, and to a somewhat lesser extent first-line supervisors, in the study would support what Klein and Associates (2009) and Webster (2008) have written about the seldom considered benefits of combat deployment than the more commonly discussed problems associated with combat deployment that studies and policies more commonly emphasize. Understandably, all respondents rated the most obvious military influences identified by Klein and Associates and Webster highest: useful weapons training, useful experience with tactical operations, useful critical incidence response, and greater willingness to be involved in dangerous situations. Except for "greater willingness to be involved in dangerous situations," which may be perceived as a core value or trait in police work as well as military combat, there was the greatest consensus (the least significant differences) between the three categories of respondents regarding these most identifiable military-type skills.

The other items identified by Klein and Associates and Webster that received relatively high positive ratings, with the exception of "greater confidence in technical skills," reflected more general behavioral and social traits than skills and were

distinguished by considerably less consensus between the three categories of military service/deployment, especially between those with and without combat who had military service background. Similar to what Klein and Associates and Webster found, combat experience was evaluated as enhancing leadership, teamwork, awareness of behavioral subtleties, and ability to quickly analyze situations, process information, and respond; but again there were significant and relatively strong differences among the three categories of respondents. The perceived effects that produced the greatest differences between the three categories were “enhanced leadership skills” and “greater maturity and discipline.” Respondents’ relatively high rating of “enhanced leadership skill” as an effect of combat experience would seemingly reinforce Cowper’s endorsement of the military’s development of leadership and commandership for policing. However, there was a significantly higher difference in rating between combat veterans and non-combat veterans than between non-combat veterans and those with no military experience. Differences in evaluation of leadership between the three groups (and particularly between combat veterans and non-combat veterans) were also found very significant in an earlier analysis of ratings of 25 items related to policing as military characteristics. Two of only three significant differences between the three groups on the 25 items in the earlier analysis were “greater emphasis on leadership than management” and “leadership skills at all levels.” Again the differences in means were as great between combat veterans and non-combat veterans as it were between non-combat veterans and non-veterans. Combat veterans, and to increasing lesser degrees non-combat veterans and then non-veterans, would interpret problems of administration and supervision in policing to a *failure* to use a military model of leadership rather than to the use of the military model of organizational structure.

The low ratings of negative effects and the relatively high ratings of positive effects of combat deployment have meaning for both recruitment of new officers and reintegration of returning officers. It would seem that the risks of hiring combat veterans, at least in small town and rural agencies, would seem to be quite low. Police departments should consider, and even should emphasize, these positive, rather than negative, aspects of combat deployment experience when recruiting and even seek out recruits with this background. The need to retrain and reintegrate returning officers may not require the development of long and superfluous programs regarding adjustment to rules of engagement, community relations, and work-related stress. Work as a law enforcement officer may actually serve instead as a means for reintegration into the community.

Given these findings, it might be assumed that instead of just having reintegration programs for returning combat veterans, agencies should consider sensitivity training for other officers in police agencies, so that they can appreciate and focus more on the positive aspects of combat deployment experience. Combat deployment should not be viewed and treated as categorically problematic. Besides focusing on mitigating the negative effects of combat deployment in the reintegration process, attention should also be given to appreciating and marshalling the positive experiences gained from combat deployment. Agencies might also consider better utilizing the special skills, abilities, and experience of these combat veterans.

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Notes

1. Law enforcement agencies throughout the United States have given those with military service experience additional points on both hiring and promotional examinations in recognition of their service to their country (Patterson, 2002). Given the combat-security role of the Israeli National Police, there was massive recruitment of young men demobilized from crack army units (Herzog, 2001), and most police officers entered the force after 3 years of compulsory military service, where they have undergone military socialization and often active participation in combat, paramilitary, or security operations (Herzog, 2001).
2. The only distinction made between reserve training and combat experience was in a short article by Sharp (2003), where he focused on the manpower impact on agencies, noting that the difference between dealing with reservists' regular military training commitments and call-ups is the unpredictability of the timing and the length of the call-up.
3. Recently, CBS included a segment produced by Andrew Metz (2013, August 4) and reported by Leslie Stahl on "Counterinsurgency Cops: Military Tactics Fight Street Crime." The program discussed how tactics used overseas in the war on terror are helping law enforcement take back the streets of Springfield, Massachusetts, from criminal gangs. The counter-insurgency methods were actually congruent with community policing. See <http://www.cbsnews.com/video/watch/?id=50152295n>
4. See articles in the "References" section from *Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Law Enforcement Bulletin* (Noble & O'Toole, 2009; Hink, 2010), *Law Enforcement News* ("Getting Ready," 2004), *Police Chief* ("Los Angeles Sheriff's Department" 2004; Hickman, 2006), *Sheriff* (Terault, 2003), *Law Enforcement Technology* (Moore, 2009), and *Law and Order* (Sharp, 2003).
5. For a very thoughtful contemporary examination of the relationship between policing and the military, see the edited volume by Easton, den Boer, Janssens, and Vander Beken *Blurring Military and Police Roles* (2010).
6. Almost all the literature has focused on surveys and interviews with *those* who have been deployed and their chiefs, but not with other officers with whom they work. Webster (2008) only interviewed 30 police managers about their returning deployed veterans. Klein Associates (2009), in their study of returning veterans to law enforcement, also used a web-based data collection tool, but sent them only to police managers, who were instructed to distribute separate surveys to their veteran officers who had returned from military service within the last 5 years.

7. In their study of returning combat veterans to policing, Klein Associates (2009) used focus groups as well as interviews.
8. For an important distinction between deployed veterans returning to police and deployed veterans recruited into policing, see Webster (2008) and Klein Associates (2009).
9. Although the state police, which comprises a large portion of the sample, patrol rural areas besides highways, they do not engage in the personalistic and non-bureaucratic rural law enforcement described by Sims (1996).
10. Of the 86 respondents answering the question about type of service, 66.26% had been in active duty (in the Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, and Coast Guard), 18.60% non-activated National Guard/Reserve, and 30.23% in activated National Guard/Reserve. Among these were 8.13% commissioned officers (O1-O5) and 91.87% enlisted (E1-E9). Although there has been no estimate nationally of the number of sworn officers with military service background, according to Hink (2010), as of November, 2008, public safety professionals represented roughly 10% of the 120,000 members of the National Guard and military reserves that have been activated.
11. According to the criminal justice statistical analysis center (SAC) in the state, the crime information center in the state (VCIC), and the police academy, there are no current statistics on the demographic composition or organizational status full-time police officers in the state since a specially funded report (Schlueter & Owen, 1992) was published in 1992 that provided a profile of law enforcement in the state. The VCIC publishes yearly numbers of full-time officers (Vcic.vermont.gov, 2014). The VCIC also must report the gender breakdown of all full-time officers in the state to the federal government. In 2011, 90.76% were male and 9.33% were female (J. Walin, personal correspondence, September 22, 2014).
12. If the items together were treated as a scale of consequences of combat deployment, then the Cronbach's alpha coefficient is .904 (and if the Cronbach's α is based on standardized items, it is .907). To determine whether there were certain items clustered together, a principal components factor analysis was undertaken. Only two components were identified (and very strongly): one with positive consequences and the other with negative consequences.
13. See Carifio and Perla (2007) on justifying treating Likert-type scales at the interval level of measurement. They state,

Glass showed that **the F test was incredibly robust to violations of the interval data assumption** (as well as moderate skewing) and could be used to do statistical tests at the scale and subscale (4 to 8 items but preferably closer to 8) level of the data that was collected using a 5- to 7-point Likert response format with **no resulting bias**. Glass also showed that the *F*-ratio could also actually be used to do **a priori** testing of selected Likert response format items at the item level if there were a sufficient number of scale points. (p. 110)

Citing Glass, they go on to note that the

F-test is extremely robust (except to violations of the equality of variances assumption), and that one does not have to lose statistical power and sensitivity by using non-parametric statistical tests in its place when analyzing Likert scale data and even analysis of such data selectively at the item level. (pp. 110-111)

To check to determine whether there were any differences when treating the Likert-type scales at the ordinal level, a supplementary analysis was done initially using the Kruskal-Wallis test, as well as an ANOVA. As there were no appreciable differences, an ANCOVA was done when controlling for covariates.

14. They were also asked (a) type of service, (b) highest rank attained, (c) length of military service, (d) type of deployment, and (e) length of deployments.

15. Although the survey included a question about type of deployment (combat, peacekeeping, disaster, and other), there were few responses to the non-combat deployment categories and responses that were not mutually exclusive as some respondents had a number of different types of deployment. Another item included four categories: no service, service that included combat deployment, service that included deployments other than combat deployment, and service without deployment.
16. Size of jurisdiction was also originally included, which was divided into six ordinal categories (less than 2,000; 2,000-4,999; 5,000-9,999; 10,000-19,999; 20,000-29,999; and over 30,000). However, respondents from the state police, who do policing in unincorporated rural areas, answered this question in terms of their statewide jurisdiction instead of the area they policed, which distorted the highest category for this item.
17. The differences that were found in a separate analysis between the police officers with and without military service background and all the positively stated consequences would seem to be largely attributed to the considerable percentage of those officers who had combat deployment experience. In another analysis of those officers who were first-line supervisors and those who were not, no differences were found on any of the combat deployment consequences.
18. Three variables, "enhanced teamwork experience" and "useful critical incident experience" did not meet Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances.
19. In an earlier analysis, the only item of 16 where there was a significant difference between the three groups regarding the effects of military style and organization on policing was "provides greater ability to deal with stress" ($F = 9.613$; significance at the .000 level). Those with combat experience had a mean of 4.31, those with military service without combat experience a mean of 3.67, and those with no military service a mean of 3.330.

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